GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:261
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2001
ANTHRAX IN INDIA
BRAHMANAND MANDAL;PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has considered the possibility of foreign group targetting India with anthrax bacteria; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to pre-empt such attacks and to deal with the consequent situation in the event of anthrax being spread here?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (CH. VIDYASAGAR RAO)

(a): Yes Sir.

(b): The Government has issued a detailed circular to all States and Union Territories containing a list of biological agents used as weapons, along with signs and symptoms, likely method of dissemination, incubation period, lethality and the availability of vaccines, anti-microbial therapy and treatment. They have been requested to earmark maximum number of beds for emergency/contingency, stocking of vaccines/sera/drugs to the extent possible and setting up of special teams of doctors for coordinated action. It has also been requested that these Teams should be sensitized on the impact of such weapons and treatment measures.

A general awareness campaign regarding Anthrax has been launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

In addition, all States/Union Territories have been sensitized to remain vigilant to the emerging threats to internal security and to have contingency plans in readiness to deal with any eventuality, including precautions against weapons of mass destruction.